

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIBREV 01731 071344Z

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FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9640

OAU CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 1731

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, OAU

SUBJECT: OAU SUMMIT-- WRAPUP

REF: LIBREVILLE 1718 ANDPREVIOUS; STATE 134061

SUMMARY: DESPITE SERIOUS INTRA-AFRICAN QUARRELS, PARTICIPANTS IN 14TH OAU SUMMIT ACHIEVED BROAD MEASURE OF AGREEMENT ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES AND ON DESIRE TO HAVE BILATERAL PROBLEMS SOLVED WITHIN AFRICAN FAMILY. END SUMMARY.

1. AS ANTICIPATED LIBREVILLE 1670, PARTICIPANTS IN JULY 2-5 OAU SUMMIT FOUND GREATEST AREA OF AGREEMENT ON ISSUES INVOLVING DECOLONIZATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. MOST CONTENTIOUS QUESTION, RECOGNITION OF PATRIOTIC FRONT AS EXCLUSIVE STANDARD-BEARER IN ZIMBABWE, WAS RESOLVED IN FAVOR OF PF LARGELY AS RESULT OF INTENSIVE LOBBYING EFFORTS ON PART OF ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT KAUNDA AND EVIDENT DESIRE OF DELEGATES TO AVOID POTENTIALLY BRUISING FIGHT (FOR DETAILS, SEE LIBREVILLE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 LIBREV 01731 071344Z

1713), GENERAL TONE OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN RESOLUTIONS WAS RELATIVELY MODERATE, SEEMINGLY REFLECTING GREATER WILLINGNESS TO CREDIT US AND OTHER WESTERN POWERS WITH HONEST INTENTIONS IN THEIR INITIATIVES FOR NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT (LIBREVILLE 1655). FIVE POWER INITIATIVE ON NAMIBIA WAS FORMALLY ENCOURAGED, FOR EXAMPLE, EVEN AS SWAPO'S POSITIONS WERE SUPPORTED, AND DOOR WAS LEFT OPEN FOR US-UK

EFFORTS IN ZIMBABWE DESPITE COMPLICATING FACTOR OF PF
RECOGNITION.

2. HIGHLY CHARGED DISCUSSIONS OF INTERVENTION IN INTERNAL
AFFAIRS OF MEMBER STATES WERE ORDER OF DAY, WITH CHAD/LIBYA
DISPUTE AND QUARRELS BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA AND
ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN MOST IMPORTANT AND VOCAL. THOUGH
IMMEDIATE PARTIES TO DISPUTES TRADED INVECTIVES, SUBSTANCE
OF ISSUES INVOLVED WAS NOT SUBJECT OF ANY SERIOUS
DEBATE AND PREDOMINANT MOOD IN CONFERENCE FAVORED NEGOTIATION
AND COMPROMISE WITHIN CONTEXT OF AFRICAN FAMILY.
SPECIFIC DISPUTES WERE THUS HANDLED BY REFERRAL TO SERIES
OF AD HOC COMMITTEES, THOUGH WITH NO ASSURANCE THESE WILL
BE ABLE TO MAKE ANY REAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARD SOLVING PROBLEMS INVOL-
VED. POTENTIALLY BITTER BATTLE OVER SAHARA
SIMILARLY AVERTED BY REAFFIRMATION OF LAST YEARS CALL FOR
EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT, THUS PERMITTING DELEGATES TO AVOID
UNDERLYING POLITICAL ISSUES.

3. SUMMIT ADOPTION OF NIGERIAN PROPOSAL FOR INCREASING
POWERS OF OAU SEC GEN AND CHAIRMAN IN DEALING WITH INTERSTATE
CONFLICTS IS IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS CREATING EFFECTIVE
OAU CONCILIATION AND MEDIATION MACHINERY, AND FURTHER
REFLECTS EVIDENT DESIRE OF SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS TO SEEK
SETTLEMENT OF INTRA-AFRICAN DISPUTES IN AFRICAN CONTEXT.
THIS SAME DESIRE TO KEEP CONFLICTS " IN THE FAMILY" WAS
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PAGE 03 LIBREV 01731 071344Z

ALSO ADDRESSED IN SENEGALESE RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN INTERVENTION
IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS, ADOPTED OF WHICH WAS
IMPORTANT VICTORY FOR MODERATES (LIBREVILLE 1693).

4. SUCH QUESTIONS AS MAYOTTE, AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION , AND
PALESTINE WERE HANDLED ROUTINELY WITH MINIMUM OF DEBATE.
WHILE TEXTS OF RESOLUTIONS ON MIDDLE EAST AND ARAB
ISSUES NOT YET AVAILABLE, REFERENCES TO THESE TOPICS IN
VARIOUS SPEECHES TO SUMMIT WERE RELATIVELY ANODYNE SO NO
DEPARTURE FROM PREVIOUS OAU POSITIONS IS EXPECTED. OTHER
POSSIBLE BATTLES WERE AVOIDED WHEN SUCH CONTENTIOUS ISSUES
AS SHABA INVASION AND SUDAN'S EFFORT TO MOVE OAU HEADQUARTERS
WERE SIMPLY NEVER DEBATED DESPITE EARLIER EXPECTATIONS
THEY WOULD BE RAISED (LIBREVILLE 1678).

5. SUMMIT TOOK IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD IN ECONOMIC AREA WITH
APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY KINSHASA EXTRAORDINARY
MINISTERIAL ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION WHICH ARE
DESIGNED EVENTUALLY TO LEAD TO CREATION OF AFRICAN COMMON
MARKET.

6. AMONG SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND LEADERSHIP

FO SENGHOR (DOYEN OF CONFERENCE) AND KAUNDA STAND OUT, WITH LATTER PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE AS LOBBYIST FOR PF. PRESIDENT BONGO ALSO MADE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION, AND HAS GIVEN INDICATION THAT HE INTENDS TO PLAY MORE ACTIVE ROLE AS OAU CHAIRMAN THAN DID HIS PREDECESSOR, MAURITIUS PRIMIN RAMGOOLAM. MOST ACTIVE DELEGATIONS WERE SENEGAL, NIGERIA, ALGERIA AND LIBYA, THOUGH LATTER TWO, FACED MUSCLE FLEXING MODERATE MAJORITY, WERE LESS SUCCESSFUL IN ACHIEVING THEIR OBJECTIVES THAN HAS BEEN CASE AT PREVIOUS CONFERENCES.

7. GENERAL CONSENSUS OF DEPARTING AFRICAN DELEGATES WAS THAT SUMMIT WAS OVERALL SUCCESS. WHILE MODERATES CLEARLY HAD UPPER HAND IN PRECEDING MINSTERAIL AND HKELD BALANCE
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PAGE 04 LIBREV 01731 071344Z

OF POWER AT SUMMIT, DESIRE TO DEMONSTRATE AFRICA'S UNITY AND SHOW ITS ABILITY TO SOLVE ITS OWN PROBLEMS WERE MORE POTENT FORCE AT SUMMIT THAN RADICAL/MODERATE SPLIT. THESE CENTRIPETAL FORCES, COUPLED WITH TRADITIONAL ANTI-COLONIAL ATTITUDES, DOMINATED LIBREVILLE CONFERENCE, THUS ENABLING BONGO TO CLAIM WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION AT ITS CLOSE THAT SUMMIT HAD PERMITTED "REDISCOVERY OF AFRICAN UNITY." STEIGMAN

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